

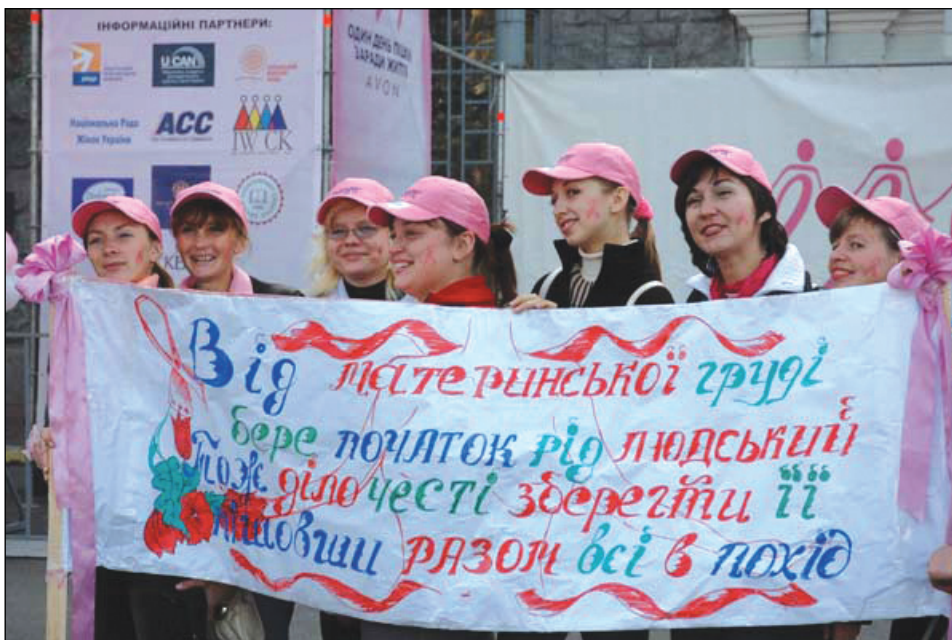
# USAID INSIGHT

## A LONG WAY FROM SILENCE TO ACTION

**O**n a sunny October day in 2006, women of all ages from all regions of Ukraine and many of their families gathered on Kontraktova Ploshcha in Kyiv for the annual *One Day Walk for Life*. The 15 km walk took 400 participants from Ukraine and other countries, including breast cancers survivors around the city and brought them to Independence Square in the city center, where they gathered together with thousands spectators to enjoy charity concert to celebrate life, good will and joint efforts. Organized by Avon, a cosmetics company, in partnership with the Women's Health and Family Planning Fund, the walk was a culmination of a nationwide fund-raising annual event - *One Day Walk for Life*. The campaign had collected 167,000 UAH to purchase mammography machines to allow early detection and diagnosis of breast cancer. Since 2002, the total of 5.9 mln. UAH have been fund-raised in Ukraine with help of the Avon Breast Cancer Crusade.

It all started in 1997 with USAID's three-year Breast Cancer Assistance Program,

see **WOMEN'S HEALTH**, p. 4



Participants of the annual *One Day Walk for Life* gathered on Kontraktova Ploshcha to raise awareness on breast cancer (Photo: Courtesy of Avon)

## DISABLED WOMAN FIGHTS TO REMOVE BARRIERS

**F**or seven years now, Anna Harchenko has used a wheelchair to get around in her native town of Cherkasy. At the age of 15, Anna fell and injured her spine while riding a horse. The wheelchair has neither isolated her from the world, nor broken her spirit. Anna graduated from secondary school, entered Cherkasy National University, and now is actively involved in community life.

There are 77,000 people with disabilities living in Cherkasy Oblast. Just like the other 700 wheelchair-bound people in Cherkasy, Anna finds it difficult to get about. Since the oblast capital, like nearly all communities in Ukraine, lacks ramps, these people are deprived of the freedom to travel the city streets, or of access to public facilities, including theaters, universities, libraries and stores. The local government in Cherkasy and the national government in Kyiv usually raise the problems of disabled only on December 3, which is the International Day of the Disabled.

Young mothers walking their babies in strollers, and people with temporary or permanent locomotory disorders also feel the effects of a dearth of ramps across the country. Then there is the associated problem of a lack of banisters along high staircases, which makes it difficult for senior citizens to get around. Uncut curbs at pedestrian crossings also cause problems.

see **MOBILITY**, p. 2



Anna Kharchenko distributes brochures during the *Mobility for Everybody* campaign (Photo: Maksym Mykhlyk)

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## MAMA+ BRINGS CHILDREN BACK TO THE FAMILY



A child assisted by MAMA+  
(Photo: Vadim Nestorov)

**S**vitlana's parents divorced when she was three. Some time later, her mother remarried, but Svitlana's relations with her stepfather were tense. So upon completion of the 9th grade, Svitlana left home to begin her own life.

Because she didn't have any professional skills, she worked as a laborer. When she met Serhiy, she believed that her life would change for the better. He was caring and supported her financially, and while some of his behavior was unusual she didn't take notice because she was in love. Only

later did she realize that he had been regularly injecting drugs. The young couple soon faced tough financial times and disagreements often turned into heated fights. Svitlana decided to leave Serhiy. No longer after she learned that she was pregnant.

To keep her job, Svitlana decided to hide her pregnancy and not to register at a women's health clinic. Nine months later, she gave a birth to a healthy baby girl, Irynka, and was also diagnosed with HIV. The maternity hospital requested that a representative from USAID's MAMA+ project speak with Svitlana.

Launched in summer 2005, MAMA+ seeks to build a system within Ukraine that keeps children born to HIV+ mothers within their biological families. It provides comprehensive psychological, social, medical and legal support for HIV+ mothers and their families in Donetsk, Kyiv and

the Crimea.

When MAMA+ psychologists met with Svitlana, she had already made a decision to abandon her baby. Five days of regular meetings and counseling didn't help. Svitlana argued that she had neither money, nor a place to live since she had broken up with the baby's father; and that she had to cope with her own HIV-positive status.

The MAMA+ team worked hard to persuade Svitlana to keep Irynka. They provided her with comprehensive information on HIV/AIDS, and the services and support available should she keep her baby. They also

worked with the hospital's chief doctor to temporarily halt the processing of Svitlana's application to transfer the baby to a state institution. The hospital agreed to temporarily hold the baby while the mother resolved her personal issues.

To help Svitlana to cope with her problems, MAMA+ team developed a case management plan. It sought to motivate Svitlana to restore her relations with her mother, which would allow her to live together with her newborn in her mother's three-room apartment in Boryspil. It also included supplying both mother and baby

with food, hygienic supplies and other essential goods; regularly transporting Svitlana to a local AIDS Center for registration and counseling her and her daughter as HIV-positive, and; providing regular home visits and counseling to her and her mother to ensure the baby's safety at home.

After much therapy, Svitlana called her mother to tell her about her new granddaughter. The meeting was a turning point in the case. Svitlana's mother was happy to hear that her daughter was alive, and both she and Svitlana's father-in-law immediately agreed to take-in both Svitlana and Irynka.

Last October, Svitlana and Irynka left the maternity hospital and headed home. With MAMA+ support, Irynka has stayed in her biological family; and both mother and baby are registered at the Kyiv AIDS Center and are under regular medical supervision, receiving the necessary therapy and diagnostics.

*In the course of 18 months, the MAMA+ Project has helped 153 children born to HIV-positive mothers stay with their families and receive needed support. Four children born to and initially abandoned by HIV-positive mothers have been successfully reunited with their biological families.*

## CHERKASY NGO ADVOCATES RIGHTS OF DISABLED

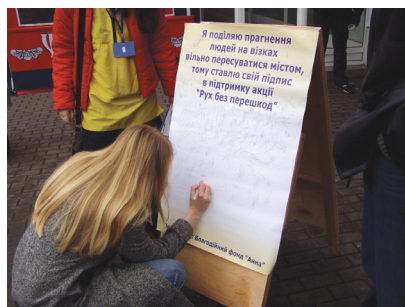
**MOBILITY**, continued from p. 2

In 2005, while attending a training seminar for people with special needs, Anna met Victoria Feofilova from *Moloda Cherkaschyna*, a Cherkasy oblast youth coalition NGO. Guided by the desire to help wheelchair-bound people like herself, Anna decided she would work for change and became involved in the NGO's activities.

Afterwards, when she saw a USAID/UCAN announcement for a grant competition, Anna decided it was time to fulfill a dream and implement a project that would allow people like her to move about town unhindered. The project, called *Mobility for Everybody*, is designed to advocate for the interests of people in wheelchairs, to legislatively resolve the problem of introducing obstacle-free architectural designs and facilities, and develop a system to attract donations from community members and businesses to install ramps and banisters. The project also aims to foster tolerance towards people with special needs by conducting various events, including tolerance training at local schools, and developing public service announcements, and media coverage on their problems.

For their first activity, the volunteers from *Moloda Cherkaschyna* held a press conference during which they introduced a brochure titled,

**Overcoming Barriers.** Three-thousand copies of the brochure were printed, and 2,000 have already been distributed to people in wheelchairs, journalists and various NGO members. They also prepared an informational video, and



A woman signs a petition advocating for the interests of people in wheelchairs (Photo: Maksym Mykhlyk)

conducted a survey of people in wheelchairs and people who use baby carriages to identify primary locations in need of ramps.

Since then, the NGO has conducted 20 training seminars in local high schools and universities to educate youth about the problems of disabled and foster tolerance toward them. In a poll conducted after each seminar, 62 percent

of the respondents said their attitude to people with special needs changed for the better; 37 percent stated they already had tolerant attitude, and 1 percent continued to believe those people were of little use to society.

As a result of the NGO activity, two ramps have been installed in the city – one near a McDonald's, and another one at a local pizza house. Two more ramps have been designed for installation, one at a local department store and another one at the entrance to the National University. Local individuals have contributed 3,500 UAH in donations towards installation of the ramps.

But most importantly, the city council has recently approved the *Environment without Barriers* program, which calls for installing more ramps, lowering curbs and developing public transportation suitable for the needs of the disabled. The city has allocated 300,000 UAH from its budget to implement the program, and soon - for the first time in the Cherkasy's history - the disabled should feel some real concern and attention from the government. All this thanks to Anna, a fragile girl in a wheelchair, for whom this initial success is a hopeful sign that more people in wheelchairs will venture out into the world and become more independent.



# CIPA Program Brings Confidence, Success and Professional Development to Ukrainian Women

In Ukraine, unlike in many Western countries, accounting is handled mostly by women. Today it provides many Ukrainian women a chance for rapid professional development.

USAID's Certified International Professional Accountant Program provides Ukrainian accountants, auditors, financial managers and economists opportunities to obtain CAP (Certified Accounting Practitioner) and CIPA (Certified International Professional Accountant) level certification through training and testing. Based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) principles, the Russian-language CIPA program bestows a certification that is recognized within the former Soviet Union by the Eurasian Council of Certified Accountants and Auditors.

According to the CIPA Examination Network, about 83 percent of CIPA program participants are women, which is about the same percentage of women in the accounting profession as a whole. Participation in this program has already helped many Ukrainian accountants achieve successful careers, improve their level of expertise and simply become more confident and self-reliant. Here are a few of their stories:



**Olexandra Matveichuk, CIPA,**  
Chief Accountant,  
Franke Ukraine

I am in charge of the Accounting Department at a subsidiary of a world leader in kitchen equipment manufacturing. The Franke Concern comprises 84 companies in 41 countries of the world. The Concern's revenues in 2005 amounted to \$1.5 billion; the company employs over 7,000 people.

Our investors demand compliance to international standards for accounting and reporting, detailed planning and budgeting, and ongoing internal control. Through CIPA, I obtained the knowledge and skills in financial and management accounting that have allowed me to work in a professional manner.



**Olena Turiy, CIPA,**  
Consultant Trainer,  
Deloitte Academy in Ukraine

Three years ago, I was a teacher at the Ivano-Frankivsk Oil and Gas University. CIPA gave a tremendous boost to my career. Now I work as a consultant trainer at the Deloitte Academy, which offers open and corporate trainings in IFRS, efficiency and risk management. Integration into world markets raises the requirements for financial professionals. They should have a thorough knowledge of international standards, be flexible and creative in decision making, and use management accounting and financial management tools properly. I help accountants, financial managers and auditors from leading companies improve their qualifications.



**Tetyana Yartseva, CAP,**  
Lead Accountant,  
Lukoil Ukraine

By obtaining a CAP certificate, I not only improved my professional expertise greatly, but boosted my confidence, too.

As the Lead Accountant of the world's second largest private oil company, I prepare international financial reports. I also analyze and summarize economic information about the company's activities, assets, cash flows and financial performance.



**Inna Bryndzia, CAP,**  
Department Chief,  
Ukrghazvydobuvannya, Naftogaz Ukraine

Ukrghazvydobuvannya, a subsidiary of Naftogaz Ukraine, was established in 1998. This is the largest natural gas producer in Ukraine. As Chief of the Bank Transactions Department, I am responsible, among other things, for analyzing cash flows, which helps ensure that the company remains solvent. Performance of financial obligations to contractors, timely and complete payment of salaries and taxes depend on my professionalism. The CIPA program has provided my colleagues and me with the professional knowledge and skills needed in a modern, dynamic economy. I plan to continue, and work toward a CIPA certificate.

**Since 2001, about 10,000 professionals have participated in exams in Ukraine. Currently, there are 2,300 CAP's and 64 CIPA's.**

## EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES **SAVE THE LIVES** OF UKRAINIAN MOTHERS

**M**aria Kovalenko was very concerned about how she would deliver her second baby after experiencing postpartum bleeding when she delivered her first son five years ago. She nearly died then. Doctors had fought hard to save her life and had succeeded in stopping the bleeding only after an hour of various medical interventions.

This time, however, her worries were unfounded. While delivering her second baby at the Lutsk Maternity Hospital — this time with her husband Vladimir present — she couldn't help smiling: "This time it was completely different. First of all, I delivered on a chair with my husband

helping me. I was scared that I would bleed like I did during my previous delivery, but doctors gave me oxytocin, and I delivered smoothly. I can't stop wondering why they couldn't do the same five years ago."

Postpartum bleeding remains a central cause of maternal mortality in developing countries, including in Ukraine where maternal deaths are three times higher than in EU countries.

Thanks to new evidence-based approaches implemented by USAID's Maternal and Infant Health Project (MIHP), which

many Ukrainian maternity hospitals are beginning to use, postpartum bleeding at the Lutsk Maternity Hospital has decreased from 2.2% in 2002 to 0.6% in 2006. The MIHP project, which is being implemented by the JSI Research and Training Institute, has been working in Ukraine for 4.5 years to improve perinatal practices and change the attitudes and outdated practices of health care providers towards evidence-based medicine, and switch to internationally recognized obstetric guidelines and protocols.

Among the most important guidelines for controlling postpartum bleeding is the implementation of Active Management of Third Stage of Labor (AMTSL). AMTSL speeds delivery of the placenta by increasing uterine contractions, which helps to prevent postpartum hemorrhaging. AMTSL includes three major steps: administration of oxytocin (a drug to help the uterus to contract) within a minute after

see **AMTSL**, p. 4



# USAID PROJECT AND SURVIVORS HELP BREAK THE SILENCE SURROUNDING BREAST CANCER

**WOMEN'S HEALTH**, continued from p. 1

which aimed to improve health care for women with breast cancer. The specific goals were to increase the quality and cost-effectiveness of breast cancer services, such as mammography, clinical breast exams, and treatment for breast cancer; increase the use of such services, and improve the quality of life for women with the disease.

## Women once walked alone

Back in the 1990s, breast cancer patients and their doctors faced a number of challenges. The health system was struggling to provide even the most basic services, so there were no organized screening programs for early detection of breast cancer. Mammography was, and still is, expensive (women pay for their own film), and high-quality mammography was only available in a few cities. Without early detection, many women were diagnosed in the late stages of their disease, when treatment options are limited, which left them only with the option of radical surgery.

Attitudes toward breast cancer were also problematic. Doctors often did not inform women of their diagnosis, usually because by the time it was made there was not much left that could be done. As one doctor explained, "I don't want them to give up hope. They must struggle if they are to survive this disease."

Women found it difficult to ask questions about their condition, because that could have meant challenging a doctor's authority, which in the past had been absolute. While psychological support was available, it generally was in a one-on-one situation. Hospital-based or community-based support groups were little known. Women with breast cancer were very much alone.

## Up-to-date information, new ideas

The USAID Breast Cancer Assistance Project's first step was to furnish patients and doctors with accurate, up-to-date information. The project developed a number of patient-education materials to help women understand their disease and participate in their own care. Technicians received training on mammography techniques. Doctors received training on clinical breast examination, so that they could begin regularly screening their patients, and on modern

treatments for breast cancer, including breast-conserving surgery.

The project also introduced the idea that women could help each other survive the disease. Afraid or ashamed of having breast cancer, women were not accustomed to talking about it. Yet, early on in the project a small-group discussion tapped a great need for women to speak openly about their experiences.

In 1999, the project invited two American breast cancer survivors to take part in a series of seminars with breast cancer patients, survivors, and medical personnel. These seminars helped inspire survivors to start organizing support groups. One seminar participant described the experience in this way: "We were born a second time and understood that, despite everything, we are still women."



Participants of the annual One Day Walk for Life finish the 15 km walk at Kyiv's Independence Square (Photo: Courtesy of Avon)

## They've come a long way

After the seminars, survivor groups began to form across the country. Before then, no survivor groups had existed, and women had nowhere to turn for the understanding and inspiration that those who had survived the disease might provide. By 2001, there were survivor groups in 15 cities across 12 oblasts.

This aspect of the project was so successful that PATH sought additional funding and opportunities to train members in providing support to peers, staffing hotlines, fund-raising, and directing an organization.

With support from the Jewish-American Joint Distribution Committee, a national association of survivor groups was formed in 2005, which included survivor groups in 22 cities representing nearly all of the country's 25 oblasts. Today, breast cancer support groups throughout Ukraine provide regular opportunities for women to receive the emotional support that is so important to their healing. They also maintain ties to the medical community and host meetings with breast cancer experts.

In addition, support group members have become a regular part of health care teams—along with surgeons, oncologists, and radiologists. Survivors help newly diagnosed women deal with their fears and guide them through treatments and surgery, reassuring them that it is possible to not only survive cancer, but to thrive. Although doctors were initially averse to working with breast cancer survivors, they now solicit their help, especially in convincing women to seek the necessary treatment.

USAID's Breast Cancer Project in Ukraine has come along way. Whereas at the first walk in 2001 people with breast cancer and the medical community were still learning to acknowledge the disease, by October 2006 survivors were openly sharing their experiences and taking action.

## UKRAINIAN HOSPITALS SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT AMTSL

**AMTSL**, continued from p. 3

birth; delivery of the placenta by a special procedure, which involves gently pulling on the umbilical cord; and a special massage after delivery of the placenta. It can even be done at home if a trained health care provider linked to essential supplies is present.

Initially Ukrainian health care providers in the pilot MIHP cites couldn't understand the importance of AMTSL and didn't properly manage the third stage of labor, especially among women who were predisposed to bleeding. Back then, trainings and follow-up visits to MIHP maternities showed that the implementation of Active Management of the Third Stage of Labor helped to decrease dramatically the level of postpartum hemorrhaging and saved many lives. In Donetsk Maternity N.3 post-partum bleeding dropped from 3.4% in 2002 to 0.1% in 2006, in Simferopol it dropped from 1.6% to 0.6%.



The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) principal mission in Ukraine is to help the country to complete the transition to a broad-based democracy with a market-oriented economy. USAID assistance focuses on the following areas: **Economic Growth, Democracy and Governance, Health and Social Sector.**

Since 1992, the USAID has provided \$1.6 billion worth of technical and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine to further the processes of democratic development, economic restructuring and social sector reform in the region.

To obtain additional information about USAID programs in Ukraine please visit the USAID website at: <http://ukraine.usaid.gov> or e-mail [omyrtsalo@usaid.gov](mailto:omyrtsalo@usaid.gov)